



BRAIS
British Association
for Islamic Studies

Annual General Meeting 2018

11.30am - 12.15pm Tuesday 10th April 2018

Forum Alumni Auditorium Lecture Theatre University of Exeter

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

BRAIS Secretary Sean McLoughlin (SM) welcomed attendees to the meeting and introduced Ayman Shihadeh (AS) as BRAIS Chair, BRAIS Treasurer, Saeko Yazaki (SY), and BRAIS Web and Communications Officer, Omar Anchassi (OA).

2. Apologies

There were no apologies.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- Minutes of the 2017 AGM were projected for the audience to view.
- Hugh Goddard commented that the BRAIS/BRISMES collaborative lecture by Olivier Roy had unfortunately been cancelled due to extreme weather. This is being re-arranged for May.
- The minutes were approved as an accurate report of the meeting.

4. Matters Arising (not otherwise on the agenda)

- There were no additional matters arising.

5. Secretary's Report

- SM spoke to his Secretary's Report which had been circulated via email ahead of the meeting.
- SM drew attention to BRAIS membership numbers which appear to be relatively low.

COMMENT FROM THE FLOOR: It was suggested that members should be encouraged to sign up by standing order to encourage renewed memberships each year.

- SM welcomed Professor Jaakko Hameen-Anttila (University of Edinburgh) as a co-opted member of the BRAIS Council in his capacity as acting Director of the Alwaleed Centre.
- SM expressed gratitude to Professor Oliver Scharbrodt and the team at the University of Chester for hosting a successful 2017 conference.

- SM expressed thanks to Professor Rob Gleave, Dr Omar Anchassi and Pam Navran at the University of Exeter for the exceptional job that they had done in 2018.
- SM offered an update on the BRAIS-DeGruyter book series. A meeting of the team is scheduled directly after the conference.
- Saeko Yazaki will be stepping down as BRAIS Treasurer in 2018. SM thanked SY for her work on behalf of BRAIS over the years. No nominations had been received for a new Treasurer, so it was agreed that the process of finding a successor would be taken forward by BRAIS Officers. SY offered a brief overview of what the role involves.
- SM presented a redrafted BRAIS Equalities and Diversity policy that AS had drawn-up. A key change to the policy includes a reference to the 2010 Equalities Act. SM invited comments from the floor.

COMMENT FROM THE FLOOR: The statement should include reference to the “protected characteristics” outlined in the 2010 Act. This would make the statement much more concrete.

- The statement was approved subject to these modifications.

6. Treasurer’s Report

- SY spoke to her Treasurer’s Report which had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- The report compared the 2016 calendar year to the 2017 calendar year. Increasing membership was a clear priority.
- SY commented that there had been no donations to BRAIS and this was perhaps something to work on.
- SY explained that conference costs were often spread over two or even three years. She therefore provided an additional income/expenditure table outlining the Chester costs.

COMMENT FROM THE FLOOR: “Can we make accounts comparable year-on-year? It’s often hard to see how things are progressing because the accounts look different each year”. AS agreed that BRAIS needs to work on making its accounts a little clearer.

Rob Gleave commented that Exeter had tried to make the conference as affordable as possible for delegates. “It’s difficult to make the accounts uniform because different institutions have different ways of doing things. Exeter were able to save VAT by running the event through the Centre for the Study of Islam. All these variables make it difficult to have a standardised procedure. This means we might be wise to be as flexible as possible”.

7. Future Planning: 2019 and 2020 Conferences

- Jon Hoover reported that BRAIS 2019 will be hosted by the University of Nottingham and will take place between the 15th – 17th April 2019 (week before Easter).
- AS reported that the Aga Khan University, London have expressed an interest in hosting the 2020 conference.

8. Questions from BRAIS Members

- “Where is BRAIS with regard to Charitable Status? Important to get this done”. AS replied that this will be taken forward.
- “BRAIS journal: has that progressed at all?” AS reported that conversations were underway about a journal. There were at least two interested publishers. BRAIS needs to appoint an Editor in Chief – an open process is underway to find this person.
- “What about an interim publication?” AS: Publishers are here and these conversations are happening.

9. Voting

There were no votes at this AGM.

10. A.O.B.

There was no A.O.B.